(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Minting of new Rs. 10 coin will depend on the indent from the Reserve Bank of India. There is no reported shortage of 25 and 50 paise coins.

(c) and (d) The new coins of Rs. 10 will be bi-metallic and are expected to be lifted by the Reserve Bank of India for circulation during 2006-2007.

Interest Free Banking

†2870. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are giving a serious thought to the proposal of interest free banking;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Loans for agricultural products in NER

2871. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any plan for granting loans to the farmers for agricultural products in the NER;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

India and NABARD have taken various steps to accelerate development of agriculture in North Eastern Region (NER). These, *inter-alia,* include the following:

- Setting up of North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFI).
- NABARD refinance allowed now to NEDFI also.
- NABARD has formulated a Pilot Scheme for credit flow through Village. Development Boards and Village Development Councils.
- Higher subsidy being given to NER for projects in rural areas.
- NABARD provides refinance to banks in North Eastern Region on liberal terms and conditions relating to eligibility, rate of interest on refinance and quantum of refinance etc.
- NABARD has prepared and circulated Area Development Plan in the Region for Implementation by Banks.

(c) Does not arise.

Occupation of premises by Banks on Lease and Rental Basis

2872. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Public Sector Units and Public Sector Banks are occupying premises in major Metro cities on lease and rental basis;

(b) if so, whether their lease agreement is subject to guidelines issued by the Ministry of Urban Development; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that as per the extant policy, the acquisition of accommodation on lease/rental basis by commercial banks for their use (*i.e.* office and residence of staff), has been left to the discretion of the bank. The Board of Directors of the banks are required to formulate guidelines for the guidance of operational staff for acquiring premises on lease/rental etc. The guidelines so formulated by the banks for acquiring of accommodation on lease/rental etc. are expected to meet the requirements of relevant laws.